

CONDUCTING A SWOT ANALYSIS: EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

A strategic analysis of the organisation and the external environment will enable the organisation to plan more effectively for the future, whilst taking into account opportunities and potential threats. The following key questions provide a basis for this analysis.

What are your organisation's strengths and weaknesses?

For example

- What are your main achievements over the last three years?
- How successful have you been in achieving your strategic objectives?
- Have you met or exceeded your targets?
- Do your current services meet users' requirements?
- How effective are your links with other key organisations/agencies in your area or sector?
- How secure is your organisation's financial position?
- Do you have the staffing/volunteer levels and expertise necessary to meet your objectives?
- How is your organisation regarded externally? Does it have a good reputation? Are you able to build effective relationships with those you wish to influence? Do you have a positive relationship with your funders/supporters?
- Is your organisation effective at communicating with external groups?
- How effective are your management systems and processes? Is your organisation well-structured and efficient or overly bureaucratic?
- Does your Management Committee have the capacity/expertise to meet the demands of the organisation?

What are the key opportunities and threats facing your organisation?

You may wish to consider, for example:

- Trends in your area of work/services
- Audit of local situation
- Membership / user needs
- Demographics
- Competition from other or similar organisations in your area
- Facilities
- Barriers to your organisation's development
- Deprivation of your catchment area, e.g. Noble Deprivation Indices
- Consultation findings, e.g. community audit, need assessment, etc
- Opportunities for developing new area of work
- Opportunities for extending services to new audiences
- Partnerships / collaborative working opportunities
- Local authority policies and plans in your area
- Central Government policies, e.g. Department for Social Development, etc
- Education and Library Board policies and plans

- Health and Social Service Board policies and plans
- Other policy documents relevant to your organisation's work or location, e.g. Taskforce
- Funding opportunities for your organisation